

Group I, Claims 1-40, drawn to a clip, classified in class 606, subclass 151;

Group II, Claims 41-45, drawn to an endoscopic device/clipping apparatus, classified in class 600, subclass 433;

Group III, Claims 46-52, drawn to a case, classified in class 128, subclass 899;

and

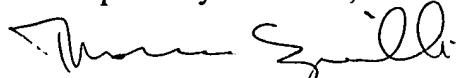
Group IV, Claims 53-56, drawn to a clipping method, classified in class 128, subclass 898.

It is the Examiner's position that the inventions listed as Groups I, II, III, and IV are distinct from each other.

In response to the Examiner's requirement for restriction, Applicants elect to prosecute the subject matter of Group I, Claims 1-40. However, Applicants reserve the right under 35 U.S.C. § 121 to file one or more divisional applications directed to the non-elected subject matter in this application.

In view of the foregoing, an examination on the merits of the elected claims, at an early date, is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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